

**Forest Service Southwestern Region (R3), Regional Forester's Office,
Cooperative and International Forestry Staff**

MEMBERSHIP BALANCE PLAN

1. Committee's Official Designation

Collaborative Forest Restoration Program Technical Advisory Panel (The Panel)

2. Authority

The Secretary of Agriculture established the Panel pursuant to the Community Forest Restoration Act (the Act) (Pub. L. No.106-393, Title VI, Section 606) and the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C., App.II.

3. Objectives and Scope of Activities

The purpose of the Panel is to evaluate proposals for forest restoration grants and provide recommendations to the Secretary about the proposals that best meet the objectives of the Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP).

4. Points of View Needed for the Committee

The Community Forest Restoration Act (Pub. L. No. 106-393, Title VI, Section 606(b)) directs the Secretary to convene a panel composed of 12 to 15 members as follows: (1) A State natural resources official from the State of New Mexico; (2) At least two representatives from Federal land management agencies; (3) At least one tribal or pueblo representative; (4) At least two independent scientists with experience in forest ecosystem restoration; and (5) Equal representation from - (a) Conservation interests, (b) Local communities, and (c) Commodity interests. Each Panel member shall serve as a representative of one of the interest groups described in Section 606 (b) of the Act. Vacancies on the Panel will be filled in the manner in which the original appointments were made. Appointments to vacant or expiring positions will be made annually.

Every effort will be made to ensure that the membership of this Committee is balanced, nevertheless, USDA recognizes that committee membership is not static and may change, depending on the work of the committee.

5. Other Balance Factors

The Forest Service conducts outreach to attract applicants from a wide range of organizations within each area of expertise on the Panel to ensure a diversity of perspectives. Equal opportunity practices in accordance with USDA policies will be followed in all appointments to the Committee. To ensure that the recommendations of the Committee have taken into account the needs of the diverse groups served by USDA, membership will include to the extent possible, individuals with demonstrated ability to represent minorities, women and persons with disabilities.

The USDA prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

6. Quorum Requirements

A majority of the Panel members must be present to constitute an official meeting of the Panel.

7. Candidate Identification Process

The Forest Service Southwestern Region maintains a list of entities interested in receiving information about the CFRP and the agency created a list serve on the CFRP website so people can sign up to receive news about the program. Announcements soliciting applications and nominations for membership on the Panel will be sent to over 1,000 people and organizations on that list. Notices describing the purpose of the Panel and the applications procedure will be published in local and regional newspapers, journals, and special interest publications. A news release will be sent to television stations, newspapers, radio stations, and their local translators in New Mexico soliciting applications for Panel membership. Information on the CFRP and the process for submitting Panel applications will be posted on the Forest Service CFRP website and on the websites of government and non-governmental partner organizations. Forest Service personnel will meet personally with a wide variety of government and non-governmental organizations to solicit Panel applications and nominations including: Tribal governments; Hispanic Land Grant Councils; economic development organizations; non-governmental organizations; vocational schools; community colleges; universities; and private businesses. The DFO also requests nominations from past Panel members. Applicants are required to

submit a narrative statement describing their motivation for serving on the Panel and their knowledge and experience with: forest management issues in New Mexico; the government planning process, working in diverse team settings toward mutually beneficial solutions to complex issues, and the diverse cultures and communities of New Mexico. Forest Service staff will review the Panel applications and provide recommendations to the Regional Forester, who will provide the Secretary with a list of Panel nominations. The applicant review process and the Regional Forester will develop recommendations for the Secretary that include a variety of perspectives.

Vacancies on the Panel will be filled in the manner in which the original appointments were made. Appointments to vacant or expiring positions will be made annually. The Forest Service continually conducts outreach to former Panel members and key stakeholders to solicit applications for Panel membership.

Once candidates have been identified, their names and background data are submitted to the USDA White House Liaison's office for vetting. The vetting process includes a background check to determine if any of the candidates have a conflict of interest that would prohibit them from serving on the committee due to criminal or ethical violations.

8. Subcommittee Balance

The balance plan for subcommittees is the same as it is for the parent committee, although the subcommittees usually include a single representative from each of the interest areas on the parent committee. The Parent committee also identifies people with specific expertise on the task the subcommittee is assigned to address. The Panel ensures that the subcommittee reflects the balance in views represented on the parent committee.

9. Other

The terms of appointment on the Panel will be staggered to assure continuity and a variety of viewpoints.

10. Prepared September 12, 2013